

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3118

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USMISSION GENEVA

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GENEVA FOR UN DISASTER RELIEF OFFICE

PASS AID/FDRC; MESA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, IN, US

SUBJECT: INDIAN MINE DISASTER

REF: STATE 303532, DELHI 17220, DELHI 17269, STATE 303788,
STATE 304703

1. WE HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM A SECOND MEETING WITH WADUD KHAN, SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF MINE/STEEL AT WHICH TIME HE EXPRESSED DEEP APPRECIATION FOR US OFFER OF ASSISTANCE NOTING WE WERE FIRST TO OFFER AID, BUT SAID THAT DUE TO TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES HAS FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS TIME TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE US OFFER OF EXPERTS AND PUMPS.

2. THE MAIN PROBLEM AS EXPRESSED BY WADUD KHAN IS A TECHNICAL ONE, NAMELY INCOMPATIBILITY WITH REGARD TO VOLTAGES WHICH THE US EQUIPMENT CALLS FOR AND WHAT IS AVAILABLE LOCALLY. THE US PUMPS CALL FOR 2060 VOLTAGE WHICH IS NOT AVAILABLE

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AT THE MINE SITE. GOI WOULD HAVE TO TAKE POWER FROM THE

EXISTING HIGH VOLTAGE TENSION LINES, WHICH ARE AT 3300 VOLTS AND STEP IT DOWN TO 2060 VOLTS. A SEARCH FOR SUCH TRANSFORMERS TO DO THIS JOB HAD BEEN MADE, BUT HE SAID NONE COULD BE FOUND IN INDIA. IF WE WERE TO USE US STEP-UP TRANSFORMERS FROM 440 TO 2060 VOLTS AS PLANNED, GOI WOULD STILL HAVE TO FIRST LOWER THE VOLTAGE FIRST TO 550 THEN TO 440 SINCE THERE IS NOT ADEQUATE 440 VOLTAGE AT THE SITE. THE INDIANS FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO DO THIS.

3. WE ASKED WADUD KHAN WHETHER THE GOI WOULD WANT THE US PUMPS IF THE USG COULD LOCATE SATISFACTORY STEP DOWN TRANSFORMERS. HE ANSWERED THAT IT WOULD, BUT THE TONE AND CONTENT OF HIS PRESENTATION INDICATED THAT THE PRIORITY OF GOI INTEREST HAD GONE DOWN A GREAT DEAL AND THE GOI MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN US PUMPS UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS ONLY AS SUPPLEMENTARY TO WHAT WOULD BE ALREADY IN USE.

4. IN THE MEANTIME WADUD KHAN SAID THAT OTHER GOI COMPANIES, LOCATED IN THE WESTERN INDIAN COAL DISTRICT HAD COME TO THEIR RESCUE BY PROVIDING SIX HIGH CAPACITY PUMPS THUS EASING THE PRESSURE INTERNALLY TO ACQUIRE THE US PUMPS. WADUD KHAN ALSO SAID THAT ACCESS TO THE MINE LIMITS THE NUMBER OF PUMPS (4 OR 5) THAT CAN BE PRESSED INTO SERVICE AT ANY ONE TIME. FURTHERMORE, HE SAID, POLISH TECHNICIANS FROM NEARBY AND SIMILAR COAL FIELD ARE NOW AT THE CHASNALA MINE AND SINCE THEY ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE OPERATIONAL PARAMETERS OF THE AREA WADUD KHAN CONSIDERS THEM FIT TO ASSIST GOI AT THIS TIME. THE POLES ARE ALSO SHIPPING IN SOME PUMPS AND ALTHOUGH OF LOWER CAPACITY THAN THE US EQUIPMENT, THEY ARE COMPATIBLE VOLTAGE WISE.

5. ACCORDING TO PRESS TICKER, FIFTEEN MEMBER SOVIET TEAM WITH ABOUT 30 TONS OF RESCUE EQUIPMENT IS ALSO DUE TO ARRIVE HERE TONIGHT.

6. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION, THE USG SHOULD NOT, REPEAT NOT, NOW SEND EITHER EQUIPMENT OR TECHNICIANS TO INDIA. WE QUESTION WHETHER UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES WE SHOULD PURSUE FURTHER THE MATTER OF PROVIDING PUMPS VIA THE STEP DOWN TRANSFORMER ROUTE.

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